

METHODS AND APPARATUS FOR SELECTING A SERVER
TO PROCESS A REQUEST

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

- 5 The invention is directed to techniques for selecting a resource from several
resources to process a request from a client. A client sends the request to a data
communications device (e.g., network device or switch), which measures usage
information from usage meters associated with each resource (e.g., server). The data
communications device then makes a usage estimate for each server of the increase in
10 usage required for that server to process the request from the client. Then the data
communications device selects one of the servers depending on the usage estimates
required to respond to the client's request. The data communications device can consider
other factors such as the current level of usage, past usage, and the increased cost of
responding to the request. In addition, the data communications device can consider the
15 peak usage level of each resource already established in a current billing period.